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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

25X1

SECRET/ [redacted] SECURITY INFORMATION

25X1A

COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT NO.	[redacted]
SUBJECT	1. The Ustrem Medical Equipment Factory in Sofia 2. The Penicillin Factory at Razgrad	DATE DISTR.	16 October 1953
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The Ustrem Medical Equipment Factory

1. The Ustrem Medical Equipment Factory is located at No. 18 Ilyantsi Street in Sofia. All orders for equipment are received from the Health Department, which places them in accordance with individual orders received from hospitals, i.e., for special types of beds for orthopedic cases, etc. No supplies go to retail stores.

2. In 1952, the factory completed its production plan by October, and then carried out special orders. The following are production plans for 1952 and 1953:

Item	No. required by 1952 plan	No. required by 1953 plan
Heavy operating tables	50	100
Light operating tables	300	500
Very light mobile table for Army	500	1,000
Instrument tables	1,000	2,000
Copper autoclaves (copper inside, nickel plated iron outside)	100	200
Thermostats	250	500
Small disinfectors (50 cm. diameter)	1,000	2,000
Stretchers, wooden handles	2,500	3,000
Stretchers, iron handles		2,000

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STATE	x	ARMY	x	NAVY	x	AIR	x	FBI		AEC		ORR Ev	x	OSI Ev	x

(Note: Washington Distribution Indicated By "X"; Field Distribution By "#".)

Item	No. required by 1952 plan	No. required by 1953 plan
Adjustable beds for bone tuberculosis cases	500	1,000
Scales with measuring rods	50	100
Brass and glass hypodermics (with Swiss-made needles, screws from Czechoslovakia, and glass tubes from the Stint Factory at Sofia and graduated at Ustrem)	2,500	5,000
Extension tables for bone-cutting operations		10 (approx.)
Painted tin bedside stands with drawers	2,000	4,000
Steel instrument cupboards with glass door	100	200
Two-door instrument cupboards, glass on three sides	100	200
Dentist's instrument cupboards with drawers turning on a central hinge	100	200

3. Hospital furniture and instruments, mainly those made at the factory, are accepted for repair and renovation, but there is not a great deal of this type of work.

4. The factory has the following equipment:

   a. One lathe of center points 1.5 meters, radius 40 centimeters, 2.5 horsepower, of German manufacture about 1940;

   b. Eight lathes of 80 centimeter center points, used in the manufacture of autoclaves, thermostats, parts for hypodermics;

   c. Electrically-operated steel saw, 2 horsepower;

   d. One 100-ton hammer press 5 horsepower, one electric screw press matrix making handles and hinges for autoclaves, for use with iron only, 8 horsepower;

   e. Two hand presses for bending 2 millimeter tin plate;

   f. Three welding machines about one meter high, with a diameter of 80 centimeters, made in the factory itself; these are operated by a crew of three men, able to work on three separate jobs; the container holds 10 kilograms carbide, and two atmospheres of pressure are produced;

   h. One electrogenic welder used in the assembly section, which employs about 80 workers, half of whom are women;

i. Two paint spraying machines, employing 20 men;

j. Five nickel-plating tubs, employing 20 men; and

k. Two wood-turning machines.

5. Raw materials are ordered through the Planning Commission, and the rejection of poor materials is an involved procedure that usually leads nowhere. Raw materials used by the factory are as follows:

a. Iron: Obtained in sheets 2 by 1 meters and 1.5 meters by 75 centimeters, in thicknesses of 0.6, 0.8, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, and 3.0 millimeters; it is of good quality, doubly refined, and believed not to be of Soviet origin; about 150 tons are used per year; some of the sheets used for autoclaves have to be re-rolled for accuracy and are sent to the Stalin Plant at Vrŭbnitsa (N 42-45, E 23-17) for this purpose;

b. Steel: Obtained in bars 5 to 20 centimeters wide, quality Extra ZH;[1] the quality is good, but supplies always lag behind schedule, particularly in the first third of the year, which informant believes is caused by red tape; about 10 tons are used per year;

c. Brass: Obtained in sheets 75 by 150 centimeters, 1 millimeter thick, and in 5-meter rods, 1 to 5 centimeters wide; 10 tons are allocated for 1953;

d. Copper: Received only in 3 millimeter plates, 1 meter by 2 meters; a total of one ton per year is used;

e. Aluminum: One-half ton of sheet aluminum for the tops of operating tables is used per year;

f. Nickel: Available in very small quantities for plating;

g. Glass: Comes from the Georgi Dimitrov Factory at Pernik (now Dimitrovo) and is amply available;

h. Paint: Obtained from local sources;

i. Carbide: About 10 tons are used per year; and

j. Oxygen: In steel flasks; uses 1,440 cubic meters per year.

6. Between 1,000 and 1,500 leva (new currency) is paid out each month for electric current.

7. The factory employs between 450 and 500 workers, and an additional 120 are to be added by the end of 1953.

8. Four armed watchmen are employed by the factory. Workers must show their work cards when entering the factory; occasionally workers are searched, mainly on leaving the factory.

9. Courses are held regularly for apprentice workers and for unskilled workers wishing to learn a trade. These are not compulsory, but a good deal of pressure is exercised. Lectures on political subjects always follow technical instruction.

The Penicillin Factory at Razgrad

10. In 1951, the Bulgarian Health Department received from the USSR a blueprint for a penicillin factory to be erected at Razgrad (N 43-32, E 26-31). Two large concrete halls were built, into which an electric furnance and fire machines were installed. The furance measures approximately 2.5 by 3.5 by 1.5 meters and develops 120 horsepower.

11. In June 1952, when the installations had been completed in accordance with directions, a Soviet chemical engineer, Etsel Ivanovich, started the machinery. Ivanovich did not appear to understand the workings of the process and did not know how to operate the potency measuring apparatus. No penicillin was obtained, but this was not discovered until samples were sent to the USSR for testing. A Soviet woman physician sent from Moscow to investigate declared that the machinery had been installed according to instructions, but that there had been an error in the blueprint.

12. The penicillin is obtained in crystal form. Waste bread (?) is used as a fermentation base. This is cut into chunks and soaked in an unknown liquid. No corn products are used.

13. Informant has heard that the process is working satisfactorily, although he has never seen any Bulgarian-made penicillin. He believes that production may not have reached the export quota set by the Soviets, and so that none is available locally. In December 1952, penicillin was not available from official allocations for a child with an acute throat infection, although American-made penicillin imported via Switzerland was available fairly cheaply on the black market.

25X1A 1. [redacted] Comment: "Zh" is probably the abbreviation for "zheleznyj" meaning iron.